

This project contemplates traditional representations of females in literature throughout history for the purposes of examining the affects produced upon women by linking traditional representations to increased depression rates among teenage girls and women. Specifically, I will be asserting that the consistent and frequent portrayal of weak women is causing females to be more inclined to identify themselves as depressed. This paper will be focusing on the works of Shakespeare, Charlotte Bronte, and Stephanie Myers and discussing their respective female characters. By examining the language and cultural practices that create Western concepts of femininity in these works I will demonstrate how the characters intensify predominant ideologies that have bound the way women function throughout time and persist today.